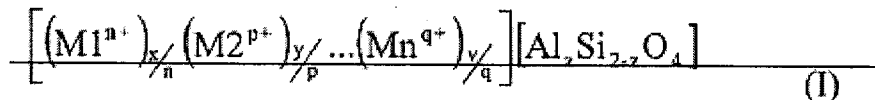


Amendment to the Claims

The following listing reflects amendments to the claims and replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. 1. (Currently Amended) A composition for storage and subsequent release of nitric oxide (NO), the composition comprising a zeolite and a pharmaceutically, nutraceutically or cosmetically-acceptable carrier, material wherein the zeolite comprises (i) extra-framework cations effective to bind nitric oxide, and (ii) comprising releasably adsorbed nitric oxide bound to the extra-framework cations, whereby the nitric oxide is released by displacement by moisture upon exposure of the composition to moisture at body or room temperature for use in surgery and/or therapy and a pharmaceutical, nutraceutical or cosmetic carrier therefor.

2. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein the zeolite has the following general formula (I):



wherein M1 and M2 ... Mn are extra framework metal cations of elements are selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Ca, Mg, Fe, Cu, Ru, Rh, Co, Ni, Zn and Ag, or are chosen from small organic cations such as $N(R_1)_a CR_2)_b^+$ wherein R_1 and R_2 are independently selected from H, CH_3 , CH_2CH_3 , or $CH_2CH_2CH_3$, and a and b are independently 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 such that $a + b = 4$;

x ranges from zero to nz;

y ranges from zero to pz, and

v ranges from zero to qz;

subject to the condition that $x/n + y/p + \dots + v/q = z$; wherein

z is the number of silicon atoms replaced by aluminium atoms in the zeolite framework;

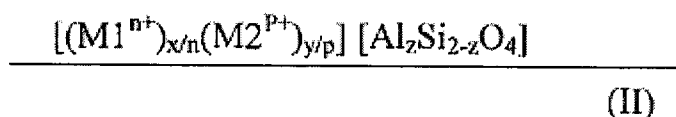
n+, p+ and q+ are the charges of the extra framework metal cations, and may

individually take

~~the values of + 1, +2 or +3.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 2 1, wherein ~~M1~~ and/or ~~M2~~ are NH_4^+ the extra-framework cations comprise a transition metal.

4. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein the zeolite has an LTA framework structure ~~the following general formula (II):~~



~~wherein M1 and M2 are extra framework metal cations of elements selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Ca, Mg, Fe, Cu, Ru, Rh, Co, Ni, Zn and Ag, or are chosen from small organic cations such as $\text{N}(\text{R}_1)_a(\text{R}_2)_b^+$ wherein R_1 and R_2 are independently selected from H, CH_3 , CH_2CH_3 , or $\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$, and a and b are independently 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 such that $a + b = 4$;~~

~~x may range from zero to nz, and~~

~~y may range from zero to pz, subject to the condition that $x/n + y/p = z$;~~

~~wherein z is the number of silicon atoms replaced by aluminium atoms in the zeolite framework;~~

~~n+ and p+ are the charges of the extra framework metal cations and may individually take the values of + 1, +2 or +3.~~

5. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 4 4, wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of Ni-LTA(A), Cu-LTA(A), Co-LTA(A), Mn-LTA(A), and Fe-LTA, ~~Na-LTA(A) and Cu-PHl.~~

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~pharmaceutical, nutraceutical or cosmetic preparation~~ composition according to claim 1, in the form of a powder or a monolith.

7. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 6, wherein said the

composition is in the form of a monolith is formed by compression of a zeolite powder or by mixing comprising a powdered zeolite with and a binder.

8. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 7, wherein the binder is selected from ceramic binders, and polymeric binders ~~and other polymers.~~

9-41. (Canceled.)

42. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 8, wherein said ceramic binder is ~~selected from the group consisting of either~~ silica and or alumina, and ~~wherein~~ said polymeric binder is selected from the group consisting of polysulfone, polyethylene, PET, polystyrene and polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).

43. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein ~~said the~~ zeolite is fully or partially or completely dehydrated ~~prior to nitric oxide loading.~~

44. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, ~~wherein said composition is sealed inside an airtight package~~ in anhydrous form.

45. (Previously Presented) A medical article comprising the composition according to claim 1.

46. (Previously Presented) A cosmetic or personal hygiene product comprising the composition according to claim 1.

47. (Currently Amended) The medical article of claim 45, wherein said medical article is selected from the group consisting of stents, catheters, wound dressings, bandages, self-adhesive plasters and patches.

48. (Currently Amended) The medical article of claim 45, wherein said medical article is a stent or a catheter.

49. (Previously Presented) The cosmetic or personal hygiene product of claim 46, wherein said cosmetic or personal hygiene product is selected from the group consisting of

cosmetics, deodorants, anti-aging skin preparations, preparations applied before, during or after hair removal, hair preparations and depilatory preparations.

50. - 52. Cancelled.

53. (New) A medical article comprising the composition of claim 1, wherein the pharmaceutically, nutraceutically or cosmetically-acceptable carrier is a binder that is either a ceramic binder or a polymeric binder and the composition is in the form of a monolith.